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EDU318

Midterm

Literacy attendance occurs at the beginning of each day. The students go to the carpet and sit in a circle. The teacher goes around to each student and asks if they have had any experiences with literacy recently. The students go around and say what they read, or if they read at all, while the teacher is taking attendance. The teacher needs to be encouraging to each student, as well as teaching the students to be good listeners. The advantages are that the students are more encouraged to read outside of class because they are able to share with the other students. Verbal skills, along with literacy skills increase because they are finding reading in different forms and sharing them. This also builds a sense of community in the classroom. The disadvantages to literacy attendance are to the students who do not have the opportunity to read at home. These students may not be able to share every day, if at all.

Gradual release of responsibility (Chapter 1) begins when someone is being taught a new skill by someone who is experienced, like a teacher. This is where all behaviors and strategies are taught. The student begins by modeling the behavior. Next, they show they know how to do it, and start practicing it under supervision. Then, the student practices the skill on their own. After the skill is mastered, the student applies the learning and connects it to other strategies learned. An example of this is teaching someone how to drive. The adult begins by modeling how to drive. Then, the learner begins to drive under supervision of the adult. All the learned behaviors are applied. The learner keeps practicing with the adult until the license is obtained, showing they have mastered the skill of driving.

It is important to create a “culture for thinking” early in the school year (chapter 2). To do so, relationships must be built, and trust needs to be established. When building relationships, it is important to let each student know that you recognize them for the individual they are. Just by letting the students know you like their new haircut, or the shirt they have on, you are establishing a relationship.

Once the relationship is built, utilize it to teach the students how to listen and respond thoughtfully and respectfully. Demonstrate how to be respectful and thoughtful to show the students good practices; just telling the students what to do will not be enough. Show the students things like how to talk to one another, complimenting, disagreements, personal space, and even raising their hands. All of these are important things that the students need to know how to do in order to be respectful.

The teacher needs to establish mutual trust with the students. In reading, the teacher needs to trust that the students are able to do the work. When a student tries something that may be too advanced for them, the student needs to trust that the teacher has their best interest at heart when they do not let them just jump into it. The teacher needs to trust in themselves that they are able to help every student reach their goals. Once the students and the teacher trust themselves, they can begin to trust each other.

Basil reading programs are very structured programs that guide the teacher and students through the process of reading. Reading workshop’s procedures can be applied to classrooms, even with the Basil reading program. Although the program is structured, there is always room for added instruction and flexibility.

When in this program, use the recommended books, as well as familiar books and leveled books to get the students reading. Allowing them to choose their books allows them to become engaged and motivated to read. Reading aloud, even if they are not the books you chose, can be an important instructional time. It promotes their motivation, oral language as well as connecting to prior knowledge. This models the teachers love for reading, and gets the students to start feeling the love! Mini-lessons are a great way to get kids thinking. These mini-lessons may include making charts when sharing about things they already know. These charts or lists give the students things to think about, talk about, or apply to the next step in reading. With reading and conferring, the students are able to demonstrate what words they know, and how they read. The students show their learning in creative ways, and then explain to the teacher what they learned, found that they knew, or still need to know from the book. In the sharing process, students are able to share their learning with one another. Also, this allows the children to be reflective about all their views and ideas as it applies to reading.

Not all texts are appropriate for every child, but what makes a text appropriate? First, check to make sure that the students are aware of what good book selecting is. They need to be aware of sentence length, number of words on a page, print size, and the readability of the words. Once this is established, the students will be able to choose books that are their level. The content of the book should be something that they are familiar with. Their prior knowledge needs to be considered as well. The students should be able to connect with the materials. The teacher should motivate the students by encouraging them to read different types of books, as well as the ones they are familiar with. There should also be a variety of books in the classroom. This way, students can have choices in what they read. This also promotes the students recommending books to one another.

I believe that teaching decoding and comprehension strategies side by side is a great thing. When teaching decoding skills, the students learn how to figure out what the word says, and what is means. This leads in to comprehension, because the next step is to understand and internalize what it is they are reading and locking it into their brain. Just like when a word doesn’t make sense or they don’t know what it is, the students write down and look at ways to figure it out. The same can be said about comprehension. If a student doesn’t understand the text, they can go back and figure out what the story is trying to say.

Schema, as it relates to reading, is our background knowledge on the topics that we apply to help us better understand what we are reading. As it relates to teaching of reading, schema is using your prior knowledge and experiences of teaching reading to apply to the new students, new learning styles, and new materials. Building schema is something that takes time. To build schema in terms of reading, multiple variations, styles, and genres must be introduced to the students, especially to beginning readers. This gives the students a chance to gain information from all aspects of reading to build further on. My ideas on the importance of schema have only gotten that much deeper after reading this chapter. I did, however, learned a great deal about building schema and the importance of the text variety.

Creating mental images involves a lot of schema! Whenever I read, I like to try and picture the characters, the setting, and what is going on. This always helps me connect to the text, because I feel like I am right there in the book. Whenever I think of the book *Maniac McGee*, I feel like I am right there with him when he meets Mars Bar, when he is at the zoo, or when he is just running. When we read the book in class, we had to illustrate the scenes as they stood out to us. This was a great way to activate our brain to spit out these mental images!

Also, in the gifted program I was in, as a class we would engage in imagery every day. We would lie on the floor, close our eyes and listen as our teacher read us a story. Throughout the story she would say things like “what do you smell? What do you see? Who is all there?” This allowed us to practice creating mental images outside of reading.

When reading is through, students usually have the stack of worksheets to complete. Instead of worksheets, other things can be implemented in its place to make reading more meaningful and constructive. Just like with decoding and comprehension, using sticky notes to keep track of words you know/don’t know, or ideas that are new/review keep the student on track and digging deeper. Once the reading is complete, have the students do a story map to tell about what they read. Then have the students compare and confer with each other about the books. Also, allow the students who read the same book in a group to do a web or story map together. This will allow for the students to bounce ideas off one another, and to gather every detail of a book.

Inferring is “the heart of meaning construction for learners of all ages”. When inferring, students should be able to draw conclusions from textual clues & from activating their schema. Being able to infer is important for higher level learning. Inferring causes students to pull out all their prior knowledge, use context clues, and comprehension skills to come up with conclusions or predictions throughout reading. As they continue reading, they are able to change their predictions as the context clues change.

When the teacher becomes more confident in their question asking, and the questions get more sophisticated, so do the students. When students need to figure out some questions that are a bit more challenging, they need to use prior knowledge, inference, literal text, and outside sources to figure them out. Teachers need to know how to demonstrate, as well as figure out how to model these strategies themselves. Questioning should be done in all areas of one’s life.

When using nonfiction books, it is easy to show the students the importance of the text. The features of nonfiction text are to guide and explain a topic. By using the conventions of a nonfiction book, students are able to understand what each piece of the book means. For instance, labels are provided to identify parts of a picture, photographs show the reader exactly what is being talked about, and captions are provided to better understand a photo. Nonfiction texts also provide close-ups, different types of print, maps, cutaways, as well as table of contents for guidance, an index to show which pages things are covered on, and a glossary to define words stated throughout the book. It is important that the teacher introduces, talks about these, and models how to use each of the conventions. By demonstrating to the students how to use these conventions, the students will be able to use and recognize all the features of a nonfiction book.

Synthesizing is more than a summary; it is tying everything together. Synthesizing uses the questioning techniques used throughout reading to predict, infer, change predictions, and in the end summarize what the reader discovered. Right now I am placed in kindergarten, and we are not doing much writing. The students do however, predict and guess with the stories the teacher reads to them. The teacher reads the title and asks the students what they think the story is about. The students say what they think and then begin to read. As she reads, she stops every couple pages and has the students relate. At the end, she has the students reflect by asking them if it turned out the way they thought.

One book they read was about making apple cider, and the teacher asked the students if they knew where apples came from (trees!), what can be made from apples (pie, caramel apples, apple juice), and then she asked if they have ever had apple cider. She activated their schema by asking what all they knew about apples, and since the book was on apple cider she tried to pull any prior knowledge of apple cider. As she read the book, she would stop to talk with them about how apples are being used in the book, and asking what do you think is going to happen next? When she finishes the book, she has the students reflect aloud, on if they thought it would end like it did or not. Once the students were finished reflecting she had a cup of apple cider ready for everyone to try. This one story aloud the students to synthesize, as well as build on their schema.